

Concerning the arrangements, by which God does well by man

A sermon outline by Friedrich Schleiermacher, delivered on 2nd Sunday of Christmas, 1802.
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Source: Johannes Bauer, hg.v., *Ungedruckte Predigten Schleiermachers aus den Jahren 1820-1828: Mit Einleitungen und mit einem Anhang ungedruckter Briefe von Schleiermacher und Henriette Herz* (Leipzig: N.Heinsius Nachfolger, 1909), 87.
From the transcript of an unknown person

Galatians 4:4

But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law.

Introduction: It seems difficult to bring together for our congregation Christmastide and the ending of the year. It is easy. The birth of Christ is the symbol for all divine blessings and events. The arrangement which is observed here is everywhere the same. So let us think on the past!

Theme: On the arrangements, by which God does well by human beings

I. When the time is fulfilled.

1. It was thus with Christ, so that his teachings could gain ground.
2.
 - a) Therefore we can also be sure, that it happens thus with all of us as well.
 - b) Let us but ask whether we also make haste in what we do, or whether we have let no moment pass us by.

II. Everything itself is a past occurrence.

1. It was thus with Christ. It would not have been good for the dissemination of his teaching, had he always remained here [on earth].
2. So it is also thus
 - a) with all contingencies in which God places us, and which become superfluous when they achieve their final end, for even as they are congenial, they are also external to us.
 - b) in order to work now here and now there, every agency must adapt, and must sooner or later work differently.
3. Let us ask whether we have not often been inexplicably downcast that should be so, and let us be wiser in the future.

III. Everything happens according to the rules of justice and order.

1. Christ, certainly without self-regard, having made an end to the Kingdom of Abuse and having set up an inner law, was himself killed under the law.
2. Everything through which human wellbeing is truly promoted must stand under the same rules. Examples have proved it. What God otherwise allows to happen is only the means by which evil comes to the day.
3. Let us examine whether we have not often wished for the opposite, and from now on submit ourselves willingly to these rules.

Conclusion: May all things past be for us a conduit of wisdom for the future!